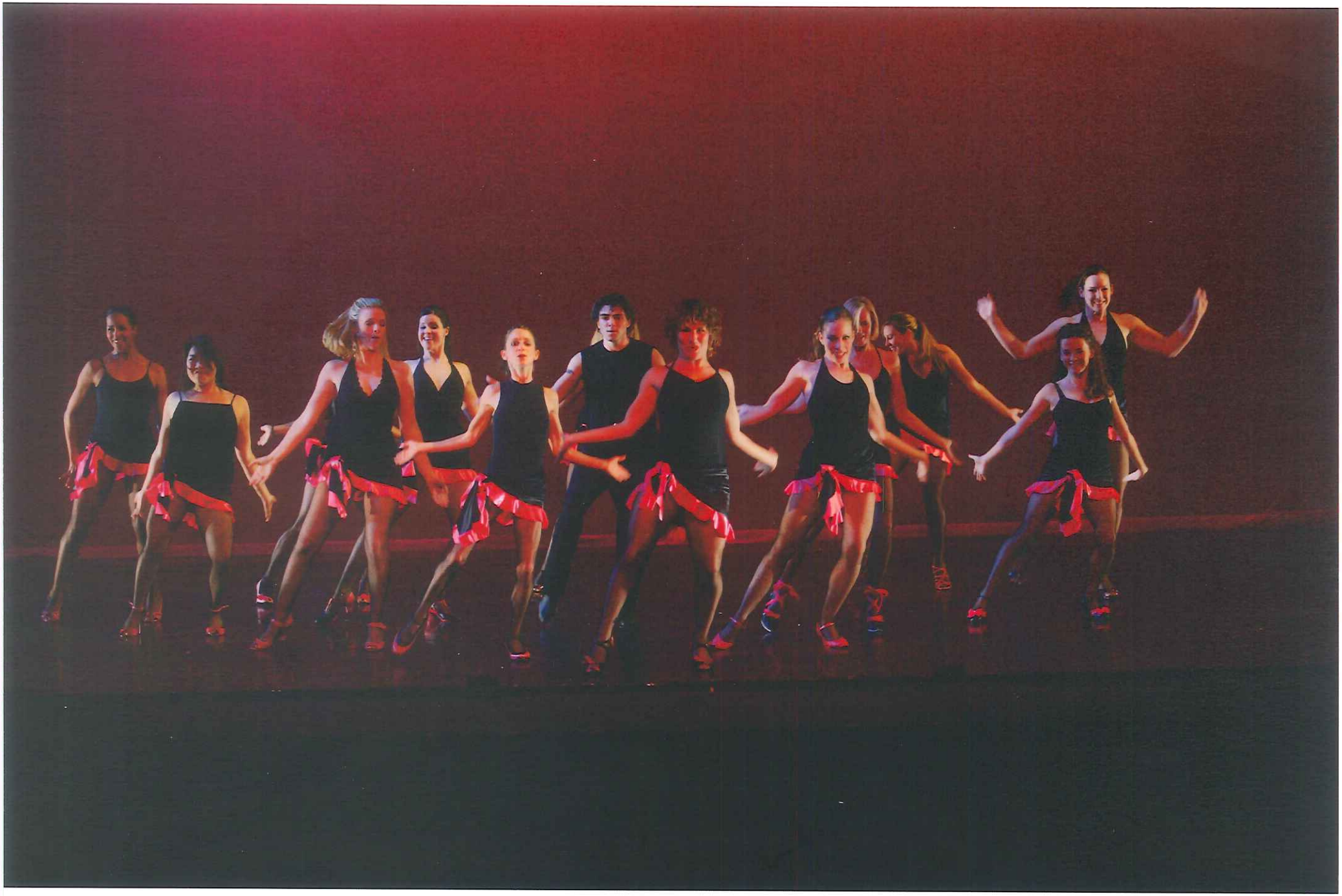
1-1-2006

Senior Dance Thesis

Lorene Gingerich
Loyola Marymount University



ABSTRACT

Dance is studied within the fields of anthropology, communication education, behavioral science, and psychology to gain a better understanding of its role through out history and across cultures. In particular, dance is examined in two ways, cultural dance and dance culture. The culture of dance is particularly interesting because of the role and influence of the body. In studying the moving body and its relation to dance culture, there is a growing interest about issues like body image, success, gender roles and social identity.

The time dancers spend together in classes, rehearsals and performances are contributing factors to how their relationships are built and maintained. Dancers relationships are shaped in the same way through the time spend creating and performing art and sharing community values and beliefs. Therefore, the dance culture and lifestyle can be better understood by examining theories about social groups and how common values and passions construct shared identities (Edwards & Harwood, 2003). Therefore, the Loyola Marymount University Dance Department is a viable site to study because it consists of college students who are in the largest identity-making phase of their careers. Though attempting to establish themselves as college students, dancers are also juggling community beliefs about the body and quality of movement. Therefore, in looking at the dance community at LMU, I will seek to analyze how do space, clothing and relationships reflect the LMU dance culture and how men and women within the LMU Dance Department experience issues and tensions of identity, body image, and success.

This thesis is dedicated to the people who made it possible: my loving family and friends, whom helped support and encourage me throughout this process, to my fellow dancers who inspire me through their movement, helping me to realize why dance defines our identity and drives our passion, and finally to my parents and Karli, without you nothing is possible.

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Chapter 1.

Introduction

New living and working environments cause individuals to physically and mentally experience a range of emotions, from inquisitive and excited to disillusioned and anxious. In particular and most frequently, college students are individuals whom experience these emotions because they are continuously experiencing unfamiliar aspects of social milieu. At first glance, the dance community is one space that appears intimidating to anyone not a member. Looking at the dance department at Loyola Marymount University (LMU), it is most obvious to non-members or outsiders new to this community that they are in a new environment. For example, unique cultural markers like cut-off sweats, plain white T-shirts and tank tops focus non-members attention toward the dancers. Although college students typically walk around wearing sweats and sweatshirts, LMU students "probably go to class in skirts, or in heels, or something cute," (Interview #1), but dancers clothing creates an environment for function over fashion. Some other key indicators that create an unfamiliar environment for non-members are the tables and benches filled with dancers entangled in conversations and busy snacking before their next class begins. Dancers' intimate interactions and interpersonal relationships tend to cause an outsider looking in to be apprehensive about initially joining this environment and social group.

Dancers entangled relationships are a part of a culture and lifestyle they share. The time dancers spend together in classes, rehearsals and performances are contributing factors to how their relationships are built and maintained. Dancers relationships are shaped in the same way through the time spend creating and performing art and sharing

community values and beliefs. Therefore, the dance culture and lifestyle can be better understood by examining theories about social groups and how common values and passions construct shared identities (Edwards & Harwood, 2003). Some common values dancers share include the emotional connections and attention focused on the body. In comparison to other artists, dancers rely solely on their body as an instrument to create and perform their art. Individual identities are based on movement and performance of their bodies; therefore, dancers construct shared identities based on these demands and values. Currently, multiple scholars have done research examining the construction of social and group identities and its effects on our construction of self. As a result, "one of the biggest challenges for identity research is to achieve a dynamic and contextualized understanding of how senses of self and identity are continuous and changing, and how personal and community beliefs and practices intertwine in identity making" (Throne, 2004, p. 365). The common practices and beliefs within dance communities affect identity making because of the nature of dance as an art. Dance as an art is achieved through concentration on the body, for example, continuous focus is placed on bodylines and maintaining a strong healthy body. Bodylines are a point of focus because it is the contours of a dancers body that is evaluated and establishes the quality of movement. It is also the evaluation of the body and its contours that generates a complexity in dancers identity-making. Thus, while understanding identity making is a challenge in current research, the LMU dance department is a viable site because it consists of college students who are in the largest identity-making phase of their careers. Though attempting to establish themselves as college students, dancers are also juggling community beliefs about the body and quality of movement. Therefore, in looking at the dance community

at LMU, I will seek to provide more analysis of how identities are socially constructed and how they are influenced to change based on community values. Some areas of research will include looking at the culture of the LMU dance department and the dynamic of the culture influences relationships and identity construction.

Site Overview

Individuals within the LMU community often describe be the dance department, as "a different world." There are many factors that contribute to this description, one in particular being the physical location. There are three sets of stairs and an elevator that serve as means of access to the second floor of Burns Fine Arts Building where the Dance Department is located. The first two sets of stairs are located inside the building and are accessed on the ground floor by two sets of by glass double doors. Visitors are forced to choose their path to the right or the left because there are two stairwells. After zigzagging up either set you encounter dance studios to the right and offices for the Dance and Art departments to the left. This route is less intimidating to enter because it immediately introduces visitors to art culture, with colorful abstract statues and paintings, as well as, biographies and pictures of the dance faculty.

After passing music offices and a large square courtyard, one's immediately immersed into the dance culture, which is much more intimidating than the first route. The third set of stairs exposes anyone who walks up them because they are located on the outside of the building and forces you to be seen from all sides of the building. At the top of this staircase are the women's restroom, benches, and more doors that lead to various art and dance studios. The first door you see leads to the women's restroom, which also leads into the women's locker room. Although there is no formal barrier or gatekeeper,

into the locker room, many individuals resist entering because of this notion of "a different world" on the other side (Field notes, 3/1, p.1). Similarly, a few steps from the women's restroom door, there is a second door that is always propped open, with a corridor that leads to the dance studios. Many people become discouraged whenever they peer into the narrow hallway and witness clumps of dancers looking in mailboxes or reading the bulletin boards. Ultimately, many people rarely venture into the dance department, due to intimidation of the activities that happen in this space.

Secondly, the clothing and attitudes of dancers contributes to the notion of "a different world." When individuals enter the space they discover that the mood of the dance department is community and family oriented, where students greet one another with a warm embrace and greet teachers with a large friendly smile. It is also common to sense confusion because as the multiple doors of the dance hallway swing open and close, it becomes crowded, sweaty, and noisy. Likewise, it is normal to find teachers and students huddled together and engaging in a casual conversation before classes begin. Despite dancers and professors close connections with one another; they are unreservedly welcoming to new people having an interest in becoming a part of their conversation and this culture.

Although acceptance into the dance community is easily granted, like in any culture one must first learn some of the norms and values dancers share. For example, the language and nature of relationships dancers share are distinctly different from other friendships, for instance, "just hanging out with dancers a lot of times we talk about dance…with other people outside the department, you don't have to worry about talking about dance because they have no idea what you're talking about (Brittany, Interview 1,

p. 7). The specific vernacular used inside and outside the studios, differentiates dancers from people who are not within their group. Dance vocabulary, including terms and elements of dance, is taught in dancers education and is distinct to their social and group identities. For example, elements that are often used to describe dance movement like space (" close kinesphere" (George, Interview 2, p. 4)), time, and energy, are also fluid throughout dancers vocabulary. Dancers establish this specific vernacular and vocabulary through composition and application classes of dance. Therefore, dance education creates a sub-division between dancers, despite the boundaries that already exist amongst dancers and non-dancers.

The boundary between outsiders and dancers exists through dancers close interactions and relationships. More specifically a sub-division exists amongst dancers' according to the levels of their dance education. For example, Laban and kinesiology offer a specific vernacular about dance and a complex understanding of the body, which are taken by older students. Older students then begin to make connections with the body, its movement concepts, and the emotions that drive movement. Divisions are also created through each particular style of dance. For example, students who have been trained in modern dance, before college, enter the Modern III class, whereas students who have never taken modern before enter into Modern II. However, the level of class placement does not always reflect the level of the dancer, but placement in each level naturally creates divide amongst the students of each class.

A natural connection amongst dancers is formed and sustained through common respect for each individual's knowledge and understanding of the body. Often junior and senior students have more interpersonal conversations and interactions with faculty

members because they have had more time to finely tune their skills and are working to develop to a professional level (Field notes, 3/3, p.4). Plus, older students have had more time around each other and their professors, which creates a safer environment to talk about the body and their understanding of it as an instrument of movement. Freshman and sophomore students then are respected and looked to for their enthusiasm to learn and discovery of new concepts. Therefore, natural divisions are created between various phases of discovery, experience and knowledge of the body, but mutual respect amongst all members creates a healthy maintenance and development of relationships.

Despite the division and level of classes, the ties that bring the department together are the concerts. Faculty and Student Concerts provide a space for dancers to work with other students and faculty that they may or may not be in class with. Because the division of classes does not enable younger and older students time and space to become acquainted, rehearsals and performances function to tie their relationships together. As a result, dance education classes and a skill level create a division in understanding between students, but does not sever the ties between their interactions and relationships.

Likewise, the LMU dance department works hard to maintain students relationships, but also works hard in terms of building its relationships within the dance community. Male and female faculty members are from within the Los Angeles dance community. From contemporary and modern dance to jazz and ballet, the LMU dance department actively works to bridge gender roles and gives equality to male and female faculty and students. Although a majority of its members are female (Field notes, 3/8, p.7), male students and instructors play a large role in breaking societies traditional

misconception of male and female dancers. For example, females typically and almost always do ballet on Pointe. However, LMU is welcoming to male dancers who desire the opportunity to take the Pointe and Variations class. Also, in the highly athletic modern dance classes, it is extremely typical that women will take on the traditional male role in partnering (Field notes, 4/1). Consequently, the LMU dance department is a viable site to examine because the dance culture is created by its distinctive gender roles, relationships and physical environment.

Literature Review

Cultural Dance and Dance Culture

The curriculum of the LMU dance department involves being active in technique classes-ballet, modern, jazz, world dance- along with taking theory classes, like Dance Theatre and History in order to become educated about the different genres of dance throughout history. Because dance has existed throughout history and differs within each culture, dance is studied across fields of anthropology (Reed 1998), communication education (Shue & Beck 2001; Edwards & Harwood 2003), behavioral sciences (Wolszon 1998), and psychology (Cash, Theriault, & Annia 2004; Robinson & Ferraro 2004; Rubin, Nemeroff; & Russo 2004) because researchers are interested in the idea of dance culture versus cultural dance.

Dance has been deeply rooted within cultures (i.e. Spanish, Native American, Indian, Philippine, Hawaiian, etc.) as a way to communicate to other tribes or to express rituals. Cultural dances are a way of the life and are entwined as part of cultural practices and rites. As colonization occurred, many of these cultural dances lost their meaning or became exoticized (Reed 1998), creating a whole new use and meaning of dance. As

colonization continued and as cultures continued to blend, numerous other cultural dances lost their traditions to Westernization as well. For example, Hawaiian dancing traditionally is very sacred and ritualistic, but was forced to become underground when they were colonized because Westerners viewed their movements as sexual and sacrilegious (Reed, 1998). Hawaiian dance lost its sanctity when Westernization turned this highly ritualistic cultural practice into most commonly known for tourist as Luau dancing and grass skirts. Therefore, the effect of Westernization is the emergence of a dance culture as oppose to developing cultural dance. Our dance culture can be explained through clothing styles, music selection, and the different genres of dance from these cultural dances. This is to say that researcher's who are interested in current dance culture, first have to examine cultural dances that influenced the current genres of dance, in order to understand the process of evolving genres throughout dance history.

Dance Culture Emerging

Most currently with the emergence of modern dance and throughout the nineteenth century there has been this cross-cultural pattern and a resistance to the traditional technique of ballet, perpetuating the emergence of multiple genres. In the early 20th century there was a turn away from formalism in ballet (Au, 1988), which encouraged choreographers and dancers to develop individual styles. The new forms of dance were hard to classify because the style, named modern, does not mean one thing (Foulkes, 2002). Therefore, many men and women pioneered different aesthetics and styles that cause the emergence of a diversified dance culture.

It was not until the 1980s, with the emergence of all these new forms of dance and evolving dance culture, when growing interests sparked anthropologists' interest in

"study of moving bodies" and its "relation between culture, body and movement" (Reed, 1998, p. 505). The groundbreaking work of anthropologists, in an era following resistance movements, especially second wave feminism, began an evolution of interest in studying the body, social identification, and gender roles within dance. Second wave feminism, spanning between 1960 and 1995 (Wood, 2005), is particularly important to the groundbreaking work of anthropologists, because this feminist movement brought a new consciousness to society about issues like body image, success, gender roles, and social identity, which in previous decades was scorned and disapproved. Similarly, I will examine these three factors and their large influence within the LMU dance department.

The body's role in dance.

A particular aspect that makes the culture of dance unique is the use of the body as a dancer's instrument. As a means to express movement, dance is unique because unlike any other sport or art, it focus' on the body and judges individuals on their ability to perform movements. Typically dance movements are thought of in respect to technical ability, as stated by Lewis (as cited in Reed, 1998) as the intertwined relationship between everyday movement and performed movements. He articulates that the relationship between everyday movement and performed movement is conditional by the perception of the participant/observer. Like all forms of art, the artist's work has specific intention, but is subjective and at the mercy of the observer. In dance the body, the study of the body, and the interpretation of movement from the body are based on the perceptions of the observer. To establish the validity of individual's interpretation of the body it is important to look at the knowledge and understanding of the individual judging. It is also good to bring up the notion of Cartesian mind/body dualism. Dance

studies looks at this rational approach to argue that the perception of self (mind) is not separate from the body (Reed, 1998 & Rubin et al., 2004). Dance studies makes this argument based on the nature of dance and our need to examine the mind/ body connection, for the art to be completely expressed. Therefore, interpretations of dance are biased because they are solely based on one's own judgment of movement. Many scholars argue that if preferences about body shapes persist the aesthetic ideals of rational thinking may never be broken because of the close connection dancers have with the mind and body (Zajonc as cited in Rubin et al., 1998). This is to say that what we commonly judge as aesthetically beautiful will never shift, unless we prefer something different through our interpretations. Therefore, it is important to define how individual body image (rational thinking) may sustain the way by which we judge and prefer certain body standards.

Cash et al. (2004) and Wolszon (1998) define body image as an individual's evaluation and attitude toward self, in regards to physical appearance. Social and societal pressures are external forces that influence people to cultivate certain ideals. Cash et al. (2004) and Wolszon (1998) both research the determinants that effect the development of body image and self-esteem. Both works declare that interpersonal experiences and interactions with others aim in the construction of body image and esteem. Some findings argue that, especially in women, it is common to encourage extreme thinness (Wolszon, 1998) and body consciousness is triggered by comparing one's self to other women (Rubin et al., 2004). Rubin et al. (2004) also support this by explaining that participants "experiencing change in how others reacted to their body changed their view of their own body and their identity" (p. 31). Body distortion may occur because of false impressions

and expectations. For example, the ideal female body is depicted by the thinnest 5% of women, which leaves 95% who do not fit this ideal (Wolszon, 1998). With these numbers it is easy to see how focus on the body can be detrimental and cause extreme critical self-perceptions.

Influences on the body and identity.

Likewise, this is the pressure many dancers internalize, from the external influences, which guide them to develop a criteria for the ideal body image. Throne (2004) declares "identity is an internalized life story that develops through self-reflection," (p. 362) and is different in each individual because of particular lived experiences. Self-reflection is necessary for dancers because the physical and emotional demand of their work. In that, dancers are forced to internalize daily messages from external sources, like teachers and classmates, for personal growth. It is essential for instructors to provide messages that create an environment for students to be constructive and not critical. This is why; in dance education feminist pedagogy develops work with an emotional link so that students can work critically and creatively. As a philosophy and critical approach, this work encourages teaching behaviors that support social performances and encourage communication (Shue & Beck, 2001) so that instructors are providing students with messages that can be positively internalized. In dance education, the key element is this emotional link that feminist pedagogy works with because it links external forces to dancer's mind/ body connection. This is why this philosophy improves the way by which dancers identify with their internalized life story through their work within the body.

There are, however, limitations to this critical approach that encourages positive communication in dance education, because beyond the classroom there are numerous other external expectations that constrain our ability to hold high self-esteem. For example, external forces like television, movies, and other media channels encourage that conformity to meet the cultural norms. The most common way the media affects men and women currently is though pop-culture and the narrow parameters that are fixed, in order, to ensure conformity. Conformity equates our continual need to compare ourselves to one another, in effort to meet cultural standards. Therefore, if we are engaged in constant comparison to one another and critiquing our self, then it is a viscous cycle of poor body image and negative self-esteem. This cyclical battle is commonly created within the dance culture because a majority of dancer's time is spent observing and critiquing one's own body in comparison to others. Then it is individual's participation in particular social groups, which aid in the development of their self-concept (Edwards & Harwood, 2003). Since dance communities tend to be very close knit, membership in this group almost guarantees a critical development of the self.

Research reports in the areas of feminist scholarship and behavioral science, support this notion that our self-concept is particularly dependent on social identity. Feminist theorists Rubin et al. (2004) state they found that women experience a change to their view of their body and identity depending on how others reacted to their body. As a dancer, there is a guarantee that the body will be examined and a point of focus. The body is used as the main modality during work in the classroom or performance on stage, which makes it constantly under analysis and inquiry. Dance scholars have shown that through movement performers invent and reinvent identities (Reed, 1998), with the

ability to create a desired identity. However, it is problematic to invent a positive self-concept, while research shows that membership in social groups construct our individual desired identity.

Gender and identity.

Similar to the ability to create one's identity in performance, physical appearance conveys information about each individual. The information of physical appearance may influence others to make assumptions, prejudices, and judge social interactions (Wolszon, 1998). Ann Daly is a dance historian who has studied the body and how dancers and audiences alike criticize the body. Daly (1995) reported that the body is an ever-changing cultural site that is complex and critiqued by dialogue (p. 519). Dialogue critiquing the body can begin in adolescence when male and female gender roles are established. Gender plays a large role in the way each individual processes information about self, social groups, and experiences (Rouner, Slater, & Domenech-Rodriguez, 2003). As Social Identity Theory states that through our social groups we gain a part of our self-concept (Edwards & Harwood, 2003). Rouner et al. (2003) provide that gender roles are a strong factor in the formation of identity. Males are expected to be tough and perform the masculine roles, whereas females learn to be passive and homemakers. These messages fed to adolescents portray universal and traditional gender roles (Rouner et al., 2003). This is particularly important to the dance culture because the stereotype and association of men with dance as either gay or ultra-feminine. Within the dance department at LMU there are few male dancers in comparison to over one hundred and fifty female students. As young children boys are encouraged to play sports and do physical activities, which isolate them from dance as a sport and athletic activity. Socially identifying with others

boys because of their membership in sports teams and playing rough, which cause there to become a separation between activities of adolescent males and females. Similarly, this separation of activities perpetuates the stereotype for dancing because as adolescents this is the activity that young men associate with little girls and are taught that it is not socially acceptable or normal for them to participate. This is apparent in the numbers of college male dancers versus female dancers. And although some may comment that dance has always been a female dominated sport, Reed (1998) declares that in the origin of dance from cultural practices males would perform warrior roles and women would have less important roles. It was not until Western culture invented the ballet to have feminine nymphs and fairies that males took the back seat in dance culture. However, with the emergence of the modern genre, dancers are expected to be more athletic and fit, which encourages audiences to view dance with a more unisex eye.

Methods

Site and Access

The dance department at Loyola Marymount University (LMU) is the site chosen for this study. The department has been selected to establish its relationship in comparison and contrast to the greater LMU and dance community. Each department and its students, at LMU, have their own community and networks, through frequent interactions and sharing common goals. This is also found in the greater communities outside of LMU, where performers, choreographers and educators have close networks and aspirations. Therefore, this site is studied with the interest of establishing particular aspects that make the LMU dance department unique, in regards to both communities in and outside this dance culture.

LMU has a small population of students, in comparison to many other college and university campuses. Therefore, access to most buildings and departments on campus are not difficult. Most classrooms are unlocked and many others are situated in open courtyards for easy access. Comparably, the dance department comes with flexible hours, and access that is easily available.

As a major and member of the dance department, I had complete access and participation in this site. As a participant observer I revealed my purpose for observation and studying this site. Thus, the members of the community were aware of the documentation and analysis of my observations. The frequency of my interaction with the dancers allowed for a plethora of data to be collected from the primary conversations. Members of the dance department did not feel censored to answer questions or interact with me while I was present because of my interconnected membership. Another pro was having access to administration, locker rooms, studios, and meetings. However, the largest con came from being a participant observer because the information became familiar and I had to remove myself from thinking as a member in order to document new or fresh information. Though an initial con, being familiar with the information aided the analysis because it indicated aspects of the department that were demanding attention.

Data Collection

Participants in the field were observed and the events observed were immediately documented to avoid error or overlooking. Therefore, initial field notes were hand written to ensure accuracy and later transferred to a typed document. To guarantee the clearest recreation, I used italics and parentheses to add any pieces of information not included in the first handwritten notes.

To ensure accuracy interviews were likewise documented at the time the interview took place and then transferred to a typed document. All interviews were formal, which included a tape recorder and interview guide. I approached the interviews formally because due to the level of my participation with members of the community I wanted to avoid any ethical matters that may arise. I conducted two interviews with one female and one male member of the LMU dance department. I interviewed these individuals to address issues of gender, skill level, evaluation of success, and social identity.

Data Coding and Analysis

As an emic approach, I looked at the site through the meanings communicated by the members' actions. As oppose to an etic approach, where it is purposeful to observe not participate, I analyzed from a native's point of view, but still derived from theory and other objective characteristics, for example, gender theory and social identity theory.

In the process of collecting the information I coded my field notes from outside disciplinary knowledge and theory, from within the site. The physical process included creating codes through narrowing down the information gathered and observed. Then a bright color marker was used to designate each of the five codes. I coded each time field notes were typed and completed. There was one copy of field notes with all the codes and colors and five other copies were made of each individual code and color. This was done so that when referencing a certain theory or aspect of the dance department, each color representing a code could be extracted to fit the context of analysis or interpretation.

A codebook was created in order to organize the bulk of information needed in the field notes and interviews. The information in the codebook was also organized by

each of the five codes and the color representing it. The codebook was referenced at the time of data analysis, in order to create a data matrix. This method of interpretation also helped organize the participants observed, interviews, and disciplinary knowledge. Based on the vast amount of information gathered, I used a data matrix to consolidate all the information for interpretation and analysis, so that all evidence could be reported.

Justification: Research Questions and Assumptions

In the long history of anthropology, psychology, and communication education dance remained on the outskirts of research. Therefore, up until only twenty years ago there was little to no research done on dance culture and cultural dance. Through investigation of feminist thought, I have found that identification to social groups constructs our image of our self. Our identity is influenced by the external interpretations of our body image and presentation of self-concept. I have discussed the effects of societal constraints on our self-construct in relation to the dance culture. In examining gender roles, males have risen to perform traditional gender roles and therefore are stereotyped when they break them. My research will look at the LMU dance department and how the dance culture is affected by the standards of society.

Therefore, I will seek to examine three factors and their large influence within the LMU dance department:

RQ1: How do space, clothing and relationships reflect the LMU dance culture?

RQ 2: How are men and women within the LMU Dance Department experiencing the issues and tensions of identity, body image, and success?

Analysis

I am interested in examining the Loyola Marymount University dance department as a culture and the issues and tensions that may exist within this culture. The aspects of the culture I will be concentration on are the space/environment, clothing, and relationships. Through exploration of these aspects of the dance culture at LMU, I found tensions and issues that exist for dancers with regards to identity, body image and success. It is most important to know that this analysis looks at the LMU dance department through the eyes of male and female members; therefore, gender may also be a determining factor in the interpretation and analysis.

Loyola Marymount University Dance Culture

Members and their interactions with one another shape organizational cultures. Then, the physical space, members clothing, and dancers relationships shape the LMU dance culture. These three aspects were selected in order to show how they make this dance culture unique from other dance and LMU culture.

Space (physical environment).

Influential physical spaces that help to create this dance culture are the picnic tables, studios, and locker rooms. The dance department at LMU has a distinct environment that is created by its positioning within the Burns Fine Arts Building. Located on the second floor, the dance department is suspended above the large square center courtyard and hidden between the Dance and Art offices (Field notes 3/3). One student describes the physical environment as:

> The studios are situated really close together, so there's not much space around and there are tables that we all sit at. Since

> it is such a small environment, it creates a lot of close kinesphere (chuckle), interaction (George, Interview 2, p. 4).

George is very clear in describing the department as a small environment, as if the culture and community were created because of its particular situation. Aspects he focuses on are the studios, which are clustered very close together. Then the physical space of the department functions to cluster members together and creates close interactions and relationships because of its space. George also attributes the small space allotted to the department to the close kinesphere dancer's use while interacting. Here the use of kinesphere is emphasized by a chuckle because George is demonstrating a shared understanding of this dance vocabulary with myself the interviewer. The use of kinesphere, a vocabulary specific to dancers, creates another division between dancers and non-dancers. More importantly, the use of this dance term refers to Space, close or near space, to describe dancers' interactions. Therefore, George attributes the physical near kinesphere (Space) of dancers to the physical environment.

Another reason for this close community and George's focus on the studios is because they are only three studios, two large studios and one small studio, for all of its members. Although there are almost one hundred and fifty dance majors and minors, these three studios are the main facilities to where dance classes occur. Each student may describe an LMU studio differently:

> There's black marley floors covering the whole ground, and there's barres on three of the four walls and mirrors on the fourth wall. And then there's a stereo system and piano, and windows

and a chalkboard (Brittany, Interview 1, p. 7).

> Over my time at LMU they have become too small, but when I first started dancing at LMU it was huge. Now as I've become more accustomed to my body, my ability and stuff like that it's become to small as I'm traveling across the floor. I like that it has high ceilings, it kind of opens it up and its airy, and I like the rafters. I like 229 better than 239 because there are windows on both sides and its nice (George, Interview, 2, p. 6).

Brittany was initially unclear of what was meant by the question, but then was geared toward the cosmetic features (marley floors, barres, mirrors and windows) and specific function of each object within the studio. Unlike Brittany, George was very specific about the architecture (high ceilings and rafters) and dimensions of each studio. The difference in the description of space may have had to do with the first dialogue being a woman and the second a male. Their response reflects the research by Rouner et al. (2003) on messages of traditional gender roles, through Brittany's response focusing on the details of the cosmetic features and George's interpretation, which was more geared toward architecture and structure. Parts of the architecture are the windows, which give alternative light to the space and are mentioned by Brittany and George, in attempt to describe a space conducive for movement, and to give a sense that the studios are large airy free flowing spaces.

In opposition to the airy space inside the studios, a dark, noisy, and crowded hallway must be accessed to reach the locker rooms and outside. The hallway is

important to note because it becomes confusing, as doors to various rooms swing open and close. Other than the three doors to the studios, there are two more doors in the hallway that connect to the women and men's locker rooms. The women and men's locker rooms are two spaces that many non-dancers do not venture into or even know about. For instance, Sasha, an art student exclaimed, " I didn't even know this was here," (Field notes, 3/1) as she ventured into the women's locker room. It is important to note that only one door separates the women's locker room from the women's restroom, which is accessible to the public from outside. The women's locker room is a space specifically for dancers, but is easily accessible to the public because of the one door that acts as a barrier. Many non-dancers, like Sasha lingered in the doorway between the restroom and locker room as if the environment intimidated her. Most of the time the women's locker room is filled with dance bags, clothes, and sweating bodies, which can be intimidating to anyone not apart of the culture (Field notes, 3/1).

Unlike the women's locker room the men's locker room is located in between all three studios and is only accessible by one door in the hallway. Access to the men's locker room is significant because not only do male members have trouble fighting their way through the crowded hallway, but also non-members rarely have knowledge and access to the space because of its location. Given permission to enter the men's locker room, it is one fourth of the size of the women's. In comparison to the women's locker room, which is filled with almost one hundred lockers, two long wood benches, and three showers (Field notes, 3/3), the men's locker room is significantly smaller, but appropriate considering the ratio of men to women in the department.

On the outside of the department there are three picnic tables and benches that aid to the close interactions of dancers. Although the second floor of Burns Art Building is shared between Dance and Art, the space directly outside the studios is almost exclusively filled with dancers. It is because the picnic tables and benches serve as a break and lunch area, a conference space, and a waiting room for the dancers (Field notes, 3/3). Many dancers are "pretty much [here] from when I first go to class in the morning until I come home at night" (Brittany, Interview 1, p. 2). The department is a space that comprises 90% of a dancers day, therefore, the close community is attributed to the significant time spent dancers spend in one another's presence. As a result, the dance culture at LMU would change or alter without anyone of these factors: dance studios, locker rooms, hallways, picnic tables and benches.

Clothing and fashion.

As much as dance is about the body, clothing for dancers is a form of self-expression. Clothing becomes personal when it is responsible for outlining the vehicle by which movement is judged. Something as simple as a t-shirt or sweats can be a hindrance to bodylines or a benefit when is creates positive and negative space. Composition of dance is largely about the creation process and dancers clothing can cause the spark of ideas for the choreographer. For example, certain colors, materials, and patterns can initiate character development and the use of props. Therefore, clothing is not just for diminishing exposure, but it is directly apart of dance as an art.

Though clothing has a part in choreography and composition, within everyday life clothing of a LMU dancer is quite different than the typical vision of a dancer as having on pink tights, a black leotard, and pointe shoes. First, compared to other students on

campus who would "probably go to class in skirts, or in heels, or something cute," dancers tend to walk around in "sweats, jackets or whatever else [is] most comfortable, big t-shits" (Brittany, Interview 1, p. 5). The "typical" student is extremely different from a dancer because dancers do not hold schedules like "typical" students. Dancers are concerned with functionality and movement, which is why they do not have time to constantly change between technique classes, academic class, and rehearsals. As well as, dancers prefer to be most comfortable because its practicality of movement, function over fashion. It is not so much a choice of fashion, but rather a cultural practice that aids to this perception of dancers having a certain sense of style.

Secondly, the clothing of the department is not just influenced by comfort but also by modern dance. Dancers are characteristically envisioned wearing tutus and pointe shoes, but dance forms like modern dance can influence the clothing choices of dancers. Though, all forms of dance require clear sight of the body and its movements, LMU specializes in a "physically challenging" (Brittany, Interview 1 & George, Interview 2) style of modern dance, where layered clothes helps dancers warm their bodies at beginning of class and in advanced classes, during class work, layers aid to cushion impact. Despite the physicality of dancers movements, their bodies must still be able to move and be seen. Therefore, dancers do not typically wear long sweat pants, but pants tend to be cut-offs (Field notes 3/1). Cut offs have become a fashion trend within dance because they expose the lower leg and ankle. These areas on the body are important because a majority of modern dance is done in parallel and alignment of the knees and ankles are imperative to the execution of movement. Thus, around campus dancers cut-offs and layered clothing may cause them to stick out because they tend to look sloppy or

as if they have just rolled out of bed. Although, dancers appear as most other college students, in actuality they draw attention to their style as result of not fitting into the rest of LMU's fashion savvy culture.

Relationships.

Dancers typically spend their time together in classes, rehearsing and performing, which facilitates the familiarity of their relationships. Within the LMU dance department there are two types of relationships that are important, student's relationships with one another and their relationship with their professors. These two types of relationships support the dynamic of the dance department.

First, dancers relationships are built with one another through the consistency of being around one another and by sharing the personal connection to the body and its movement.

> I interact more with dancers then with people outside the dance department just because that's where I am the whole day. (Brittany, Interview 1, p. 3). I think freshman year I was a lot closer to people outside the department and I think over the years I've just gotten so involved in the department itself and I spend all my time there, so that's where a lot of my close relationships have become (Brittany, Interview 1, p. 6).

> I know a lot of people outside the department…well my roommates are not in the dance department but then again, like I said the majority of my time, on campus, is in the department …especially

> my work with the theatre department has allowed me to meet and get to know a lot of people, in the theatre department…there's a select number of people that I really know, in the dance department, and then there's a greater number of people, you could say the majority of people that I'm acquainted with (George, Interview 2, p. 3)

Attributing to the familiarity of their relationships, both dancers express that a majority or all of their time is spent in the dance department. Though both dancers express the amount of time they spend in the department, each describe their relationships rather differently.

Brittany describes that many of her close relationships are with other dancers. She describes her involvement and emphasizes how involved she has become strictly within the dance department. The relationships she has with other dancers appear stronger because of the time they spend together.

While, George brings up the issue of how many people he *really* knows in the dance department. It is interesting because despite the frequency of interaction and familiarity with one another, he considers a greater number of people as just acquaintances. Some motive to why George considers himself acquainted with a greater number of dancers is the fact that the department is one male to thirty females and that he lives with male roommates from outside the department. Each member's involvement seems to determine the level of the relationships they have, however, the number of relationships Brittany has with other females is guaranteed to be higher than the amount of relationships George has with other males in the department. Consequently, gender is a

factor in the level of relationships within the department. Thus, dance is a setting in which people share a connection to the body, but dancers may not be connected and acquainted with all aspects of each other's lives.

The second type of relationship, unique to the dance department, is the student professor relationships. Unlike other departments, students and teachers "get to know [each other] more on a level in and outside the classroom" because they're "not just there to do math or science, but working and growing as artists together" (Brittany, Interview 1, p. 3). Each student can have a different relationship with each teacher depending on the mood a teacher sets, a particular style of movement, and the type of skills a dancers brings to the class

> I think that each teacher I take from brings a different mood or setting into the classroom, and that's really important, just, so we're not doing the same thing each class... I think personally in ballet, with Trisha, I definitely go in there wanting to work and get technique... Helen really stresses the natural environment and just feeling everything that's around you... (Brittany, Interview 1, p. 7)

Trisha's class is described as if it is exceptionally structured ("to work and get technique"), whereas the mood in Helen's classroom seems exploratory and less structured ("feeling everything around you"). All professors in all disciplines have different levels of interaction and relationships with their students; however, dance professors relationships with students are unique because they share in the dancers experience by mutually learning and growing themselves. As an artist, professors learn through watching and observing their students and classroom environment. The level of

interaction and growth between students and professors is a part of what makes the dance department distinctive.

Through the web of interactions students and professors have woven, dancers maintain a certain casual and comfortable relationship with their professors.

> I have become more comfortable, with the professors, obviously, well one thing I like about dance is that we can call professors by their first name… I also identify differently with different professors. My interactions with Karla Michaels is far, far different than my interaction with David, where you could almost say is brotherly at points. Even though we maintain that student-professor relationship, um, it is different than my interaction with Josh or Patricia, or Trisha, or Geoffrey, or whoever teachers the Ballet class (George, Interview 2, p. 8)

Throughout the dialogue, whenever Brittany and George referenced their professors, they did so with a certain comfort and casualness. George's relationship with David is an exceptional example of this comfort because the *brotherly* bond they share is rooted in their equal need for one another. Students require instruction to grow in artistry, while professors need physical bodies to replicate their movement and put into practice their art. Thus, dancers relationships with their professors are distinguishingly different than that of students with a history professor because of the nature the body and the role it plays in dancing and identity making.

Tensions and Issues

Through exploration of physical space, clothing, and relationships in the dance culture at Loyola Marymount University it is apparent that some tensions and issues exist with identity, body image and success.

Identity.

Our identity is both who we believe we are and is constructed by the interactions we have with others. This is why Throne (2004) declares "identity is an internalized life story that develops through self-reflections," (p. 362) and is different in each individual because of particular lived experiences. Therefore, a dancer creates an identity based on self-reflections and lived experience, which is necessary for the physical and emotional demand of their work.

> Inside the studio, I think people know I'm a dancer, just by the emotions I bring to the movement and how I work in class and I'm focused; so that shows other people that I'm dedicated to what I'm doing (Brittany, Interview 1, p. 4).

Brittany is able to convey to others her identity as a dancer through her understanding for the emotional demand of her work ("dance is one of the most emotional art forms there is…"). Likewise it is through lived experiences ("I started dancing…when I was about three years old.") that this dancer knows what emotions she is able to bring to the movement. Brittany's explanation that she began to dance at the age of three conveys the way she has learned to show others, through movement, her focus and emotional dedication. Another dancer supports the emotion Brittany brings to the movement by explaining that:

> …dance gives us the ability to express ourselves and I find the emotional connection when I'm moving better than when I'm speaking (George, Interview 2, p. 9).

Brittany and George's responses build research for identity-making by providing that the identity of a dancer lies in their ability to move and through movement they are able to communicate and express to others their concept of self. For example, George explains, "when I'm moving [I communicate] better than when I'm speaking" (Interview 2, p. 9) and Brittany states "I think you are able to feel things that you can't necessarily…speak about" (Interview 1, p. 11). It is interesting in the way that both dancers explain movement: as a way to show and communicate to others better senses of themselves. Both dancers have similar explanations on the way that movement requires a physical and emotional connection, which supports current research on identity (Throne, 2004). Dance is a life experience shared by both of these dancers and is a rationale for why movement functions as a greater means of communication and understanding of self-concept.

As a life experience dance is always playing a different role in dancers lives. Transitioning from studio dance to collegic dance, many men and women become more aware of their identity as a dancer. Some ways this transition makes dancers more aware of their identity is through the ways they are always classified by gender and skill level.

> I'd like to say to other people that I am a dancer first and a male dancer second. Just having that mentality for myself makes me work differently because of the association with being a male dancer….I've been asked if I was gay, which

> is not a big deal because I'm ok with that… (George, Interview 2, p. 5).

It seems reasonable to reflect on one's own identity as being a dancer first because by saying "male dancer" you immediately internalize the life experience of being associated with being feminine or gay. Other dance students and research (Throne, 2004 & Rouner et al., 2003) support George's rationale. First, "I think it would be hard to be a guy in the dance department, just because of what society, thinks of a man as being strong and thinks being a dancer as being more feminine (Brittany, Interview 1, p. 12). Second, Rouner et al. (2003) state that gender plays a large role in the way each individual processes information about the self, social groups, and experiences. Rouner et al. (2003) also assert that gender roles are a strong factor in the formation of identity. Therefore, resisting an identity as a male dancer and understanding one's self as simply a dancer is one way in which George processes his information about himself and his experiences.

The main contributing factor to receiving external messages is from dance instructors, who are providing students with critiques or suggestions for adjustments.

> I think it's hard for me to hear corrections a lot of times, just because I take it too personally, and I get really sensitive and so like, a teacher tells me there's something wrong I… take it to heart…(Brittany, Interview 1, p. 9).

> Umm…I'm extremely comfortable, whether it be verbal or physical. If they actually place their hands on my body it's fine and when they tell me it's fine as well. I'm in a place where I

> always always always want to…umm…get a correction and become a better dancer, but I find that its more effective when the teacher approaches you academically and respectfully, rather than aggressively and umm…arrogantly or condescendingly (George, Interview 2, p. 7).

The way in which dancers construct their identity can also inhibit the way in which corrections are received. The first response demonstrates how external messages from instructors can be internalized negatively and rejected. Unlike Brittany's response George demonstrates an overwhelming acceptance of self-criticism. In fact, he believes that mirrors and corrections should be taken as "clinical not critical observation" (George, Interview 2, p.7). It is interesting that the male response is comfortable with criticism, inside the classroom, in light of other external messages outside the classroom that typically associate men as ultra-feminine or gay. However, Brittany's response seems to be consistent with researchers findings that women react and change their view of their body by how others react (Rubin et al., 2003). Therefore, the personal attack Brittany feels is a result of internalizing professors' messages, "I take it too personally," which alters her perception of herself. And although George freely accepts corrections, he also supports Rouner et al. (2003) and (Throne (2004) on identity construction, by stating that its more effective "when the teacher approaches you academically and respectfully, rather than aggressively and umm…arrogantly or condescendingly," which is another way of expressing that he too is affected by internalizing negative external messages.

Body image.

If a dancers identity is constructed and dependent on the way in which the body performs movement, then a dancers body image is created through the nature of the art form being focused on the body and individuals judging their ability to move. The way in which individuals are judged contributes to their self worth and image of the self. Dance studies looks at mind/body dualism as a rational approach to argue that the perception of self (mind) is not separate from the body (Reed, 1998; & Rubin et al., 2004).

> I think mentality has a lot to do with they way we...may be not the actual way that we move, but they way that we approach movement... and then the way we approach movement is what then directly affects the way move. So A is B is C therefore A is C, I guess so what I think is a positive mental attitude toward class work is going produce better movement in the body (George, Interview 2, p. 9).

It is interesting the way in which dancers perceive that taking a certain approach (mind) to movement (body) directly affects the way in which they actually move. Dance studies would support the notion and claim that a "positive mentality" positively affects the way in which you move. Therefore, the mind effects the way we move because the way we imagine the body is how we perceive the way it moves.

It is important to look at the issues and tensions that dancers experience because of the interpersonal experiences and interaction with others, for example, "freshmen year and sophomore year I really struggled because I watched other people too much, and I think that brought a little competition...I would compare myself to them" (Brittany, Interview 1, p. 8). consequently helping in the construction of the body and esteem (Cash

et al., 2004; Wolzon, 1998). Body consciousness is triggered, especially in women, by comparing one's self to other women and body distortion occurs because of false impressions and expectations (Ruben et al., 2004).

Success.

Each person evaluates their own success differently, whether some one achieves success through hard work, or has to work hard to prove the success they have been given. In the dance world, male dancers struggle between how they evaluate and achieve success.

> Male dancers get certain privileges, because you' re a male dancer, um you get certain opportunities, which is true, but I don't want to take it for granted. I would like to think that I earned my position in certain, a piece I was in or in a class that I got into (George, Interview 2, p. 5).

Despite the challenges male dancers face by being in "the performing arts medium" (George, Interview 2, p. 11) they also juggle the feelings of success. Because men are a minority in dance, they often receive privileges and opportunities to fulfill a quota.

> Sophomore year I didn't even audition for Jason piece, but I tried for Patricia's piece, but was placed in Josh's piece because he needed a guy, I was flattered… but it made me think that I needed to work that much harder to earn my place in that piece, rather than it just have been given to me (George, Interview 2, p. 5)

For the male dancer a dichotomy exists between being grateful and feeling adequate. George is rewarded with this part because a choreographer feels he is skilled enough to

perform the piece, however, adequacy is a factor because he is not evaluated against the other dancers based on skill, but a decision was made based purely on gender. The fact remains that George was selected to fulfill the one male role needed to produce and perform the piece. If George accepts the opportunity, he takes the spot away from another female dancer, who auditioned fairly. The problem remains with whether or not George accepts the opportunity, he is left feeling as if he did not earn his position. Therefore, George balances success between looking at it as a window of opportunity and the other side questioning satisfaction and capability. Male dancers train their bodies and fine-tune their skills a great deal like female dancers. However, there are more windows of opportunity and big breaks available to men because of their ratio to women. As a result, a big break for men can be brushed off and attributed to the fact that male dancers are given "certain privileges," and not because they have worked hard to earn it.

Within the LMU dance department, male and female students are given equal opportunity to be successful. Students describe how they believe they earn success now and how it can be achieved as they enter the dance world.

> I think basically its going to class and working hard, and doing the best you can in class, and going from there…(Brittany, Interview 1, p. 10).

> Hard work, show up on time and ready to dance. Be enthusiastic about the work because we made this decision to come into a program… made a decision to be a dancer, we have to take the responsibility that comes along with being a dancer, very seriously (George, Interview 2,

p. 9).

It is apparent in their responses that students understand that being successful is achieved through hard work and practice. Dancers work ethic and enthusiasm inside the classroom is something that assures them success. George and Brittany's responses are powerful, in that, they recognizes the commitment they has to the dance program and that it is not anyone else's duty ("responsibility") to ensure their success, but their own time and dedication the developing their skills and style.

Conclusion

College students' require adjustment to their new environment, culture, and relationships. The Loyola Marymount Dance Depart is particular within the college experience because it requires a process of adjustment to anyone who is not yet a member. The environment on the second floor of Burns Fine Arts Building is comprised of studios, locker rooms, hallways, picnic tables and benches filled with dancers entangled in conversation and activities that are intimidating to anyone not a member.

Dancers spend much of their time together, which encourages them to have relationships where they share common practices and beliefs. Then, dance culture and lifestyle are better understood through examining and understanding theories about social groups and shared identities (Edwards & Harwood, 2003). The common practices and beliefs within dance communities affect identity making because of the nature of dance as art. Dance relies solely on the body as its instrument, and thus, dancers create identities based on the value and demands placed on their body. Therefore, in attempt to establish themselves as college students, dancers are juggling community beliefs about the body and quality of movement.

Then, in studying the data gathered, interviews and field observations, dancers provided examples to the research done on social identities (Rouner et al., 2003 & Throne, 2004) and dance culture (Reed, 1998 & Rubin et al., 2004). As a result, issues and tensions of identity, body image and success demanded attention. In the analysis, it was proven through the dancers responses that gender plays a role in their experiences. For example, George's experience with body image and success was extremely different

from Brittany's. Likewise, the relationships students experience with one another is affected by the role gender plays on their experience.

The limitations to this project lie in the theories that were used. To better understand the dynamic of dancers relationships and the role dance plays their lives, it would benefit to have more research and theory on the dance education LMU students receive. Provided with a specific understanding of dance vocabulary and a larger scope of dance education, a non-dancer may have a better grasp of the LMU dance curriculum.

In future research I would examine more thoroughly the poor concepts and issues with body image that males have and track the training of female dancers from adolescence to adulthood, in order to establish at what stage of development female dancers construct issues with body image. Likewise, in future research I would look at the LMU dance administration and the role that they play in organizing and determining the dynamic of this dance culture.

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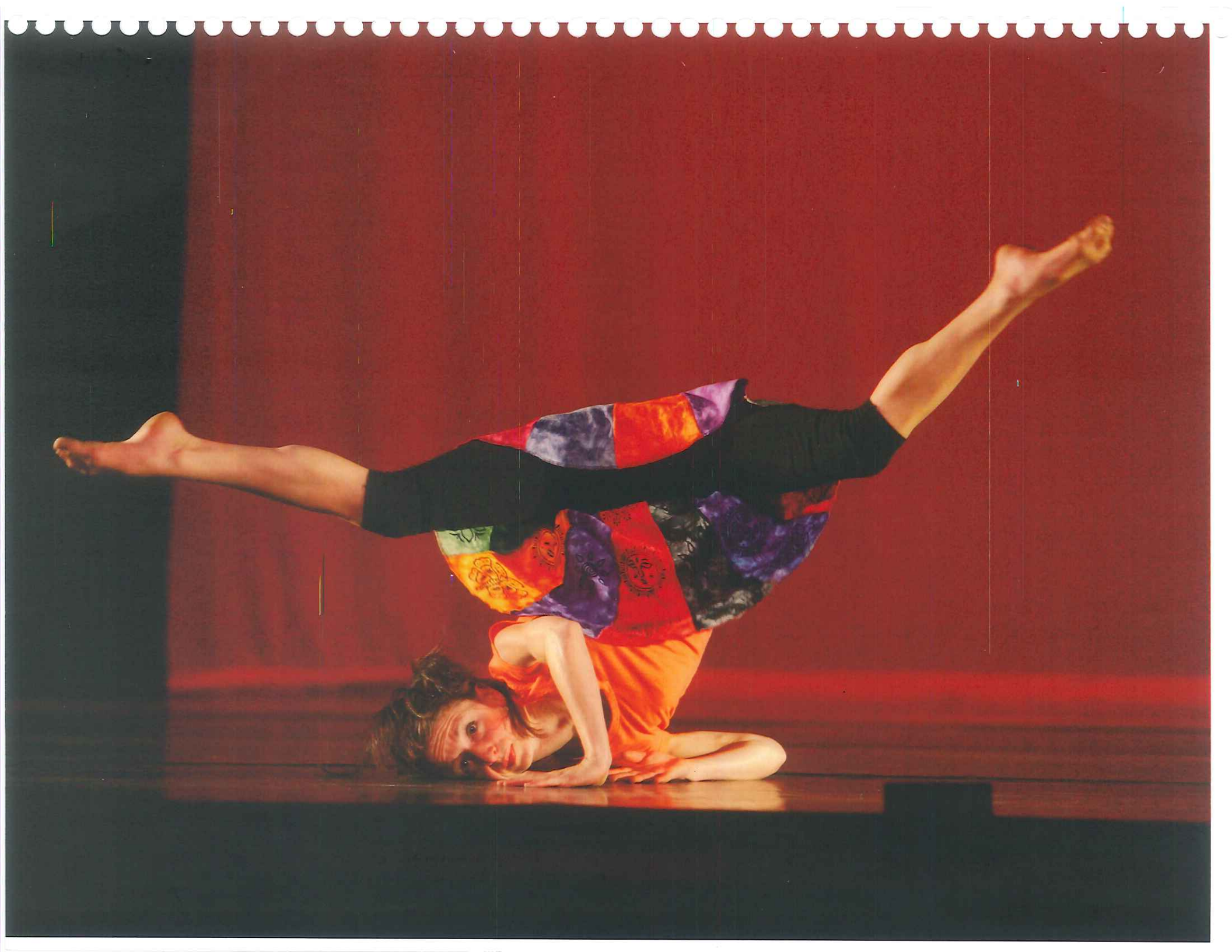

Chapter 2.

What is Dance?

Reading Dancing: Bodies and Subjects in Contemporary American Dance
Four Bodies and Subjects
Susan L. Foster

Each individual creates and performs dance differently because of the way that the body and mind unifies itself. Dance for myself has been a dichotomy of self-expression and discipline. Through dance I constantly straddle a fence, negotiating control with the ability to express myself artistically. I find that these negotiations in my dancing extend into other aspects of my life experiences because dance enables me to recognize when I am stifling growth and the freedom to learn. Dance has come to define me, as to say that dance roadmaps my life, its events, struggles, and triumphs. Thus, dance cannot be considered an objective concept, but a total mind and body experience that consumes individuals who partake.

To better understand how I have come to define dance, I looked to Susan L. Foster's book *Reading Dance: Bodies and Subjects in Contemporary American Dance,* where she discusses several modes that have contributed to the way we read and write dance. Specifically in the first chapter, Foster (1986) describes four choreographers, Martha Graham, Merce Cunningham, George Balanchine, and Deborah Hay, and their approaches to creating dance. As a result, she attempts to argue that these four choreographers have affected the way we view the "world peopled with dancers and nondancers" (p. 49). Therefore, a section in chapter one entitled *Four Bodies and Subjects,* compares and contrasts the four choreographers creative and choreographic processes, in order to help us understand the phenomenon of dance and the self (Foster,

1986). Consequently, in this paper I will be looking at a dancers notion of the body and the self through the lens of Foster (1986), *Four Bodies and Subjects*.

> Residing inside the body, the self is composed of thinking and feeling functions, conscious and unconscious attitudes, and a spiritual aspect of the soul. Influenced by the body's physical need and affect by the outside world, the self nonetheless lives an autonomous existence as unitary and as bounded as the body it inhabits.
>
> Although the body is a natural, physical entity that reflects and responds to the life of the self, it seems to maintain a closer connection to the unconscious, feeling portions of the self than to the rational, conscious self (Foss, 1986, p. 50).

She raises the issue of the self "bounded" and "unitary" to the body to get us thinking about the nature of the body. Many other scholars share in this thinking, for example, dance studies looks at this rational approach to argue that the perception of self (mind) is not separate from the body (Reed, 1998 & Rubin et al., 2004). Dance studies makes this argument based on the nature of dance and our need to examine the mind/ body connection, for the art to be completely expressed. Dance studies, however, is not the only field that makes this argument about the mind/ body connection. In philosophy, we learned that Descartes, in his *Meditation,* suggests a body/ mind connection. Therefore, dance studies draws upon philosophy in order to make the argument that art cannot be

completely expressed without examining the nature of dance and our mind/ body connection. Consequently, because of the nature of dance, then interpretations of dance are biased because they are solely based on one's own judgment of movement. Foss (1986), thus, articulates in *Four Bodies and Subjects,* the notion of different interpretations by comparing and contrasting four choreographers different approaches to the body, self hood, and its effects on viewers' experience.

Foss looks at how Graham, Balanchine, Cunningham, and Hay make and organize dance. She breaks down their creative and choreographic processes into the way in which they conduct classes, rehearsal, and performances. The body is then used as the main modality during work in the classroom or performance on stage, which makes it constantly under analysis and inquiry. Dance scholars have shown that through movement, performers invent and reinvent identities (Reed, 1998), with the ability to create a desired identity. This is where Foss (1986) links the argument that dancers will look for a desired identity through their connection of the body and self, found in the aesthetics of the four choreographers. The aesthetics of these four choreographers are studied and discussed because they emerged when there was a turn away from formalism in ballet (Au, 1988), which perpetuated these men and women to pioneer different aesthetics and styles of modern dance. In Dance History, we thoroughly studied and examined these men and women as pioneers of modern dance. Similarly, in courses like Styles and Forms, we streamlined our knowledge of Dance History in order to begin to develop our own aesthetic. Thus, it is extremely important and interesting to digest Foss because she unifies my movement and scholastic (Body/ mind) knowledge.

First, Martha Graham's approach to dance stems from the notion that motivation comes from deep within the psyche (Foss, 1986). Like Foss argues that there is a unitary connection between body and self, Graham also conducts classes, rehearsals and performances as an organic whole. Classes are to train one's body and develop strength, flexibility, and coordination. Similar to Graham's overall notion of motivation, she does not see movement sequences in class for dancing, but as exercises for self-motivation and discipline (Foss, 1986). Self-motivation and reflection are necessary for dancers because of the physical and emotional demand of their work. In that, dancers must internalize daily messages from external sources, i.e. teachers or classmates, for personal growth and motivation. It is the physical and emotional demand of a dancer's work that Martha Graham was interested in. The messages that her dancers had to internalize were dramatic themes and dynamic characters (Foss, 1986). It is essential for her to provide messages that created an environment for students to be constructive and not critical. This is why, in dance education it is explained and feminist pedagogy has developed work with an emotional link so that students can work critically and creatively (Shue & Beck, 2001). In dance education, the key element is this emotional link that feminist pedagogy works with because it links external forces to dancer's mind/body connection. It is in this way that Foss (1986) identifies Graham's process, that her dancers are expected to work creatively to acquire knowledge about the characters they were asked to portray. Karen MacDonald's approach to choreography and portrayal of characters is similar to that of Martha Graham. I learned that in highly dramatic pieces we were not just trained bodies who moved, but we were simultaneously meeting the emotional and physical demands of the work. Meeting these demands meant becoming characters that maintain physical

control while fulfilling the human need for emotional freedom. Therefore, Grahams dualities of the exterior body and the interior self also occurs in performance when the months and years of discipline are reached and they have a moment of understanding and liberation.

Foss (1986) links choreographers George Balanchine and Martha Graham together by describing how both identify their dancers as different than all others because they embody high innate and encultured qualities. They both believe that each of their dancers have the necessary skills, but through training innate talent in technique classes, the true artist emerges. Graham trains the body as an instrument, which is responsive to a controlling and self-disciplined mind. Whereas, Balanchine looks at what already is present in the body structure and nurtures dedication (Foss, 1986). In this way, both choreographers are interested in the innate qualities of the dancer and how it is manifested through the choreographers work.

Therefore, Balanchine must be examined apart from Graham in order to better understand his aesthetic and the effect his work has had on the "world of dancers" (Foss, 1986). Balanchine like Graham was concerned with the innate qualities of a dancer, but it had little to do with inner motivations. Instead, he was much more focused on the body and performing excellence. His choreographic process has more to do with listening to music and watching dancers. In this way it is through what he hears and the movement he sees that suggest choreography (Foss, 1986). Concerned with body shapes and gestures as a medium, Balanchine is an ideal subject to study Foss' notion of the body and the self. With so much attention focused on the body it is difficult to understand why Balanchine's process has little to do with self-inquiry. In support of this claim, Ann Daly a dance

historian has studied the body and how dancers and audiences alike criticize the body. Daly (1995) reported that the body is an ever-changing cultural site that is complex and critiqued by dialogue (p. 519). Dialogue in courses, like To Dance is Human, encouraged our participation in discussing the body as a cultural site. We disarticulated our critique of the body through discussions about different cultures and how their beliefs have influenced our notion of the body. Therefore, Daly and her report of the body under constant critique by audiences justify our concentration on the body and especially Balanchine's concentration on the body's shapes and movement excellence.

Similar to Balanchine, Merce Cunningham also puts his emphasis on the physical body and its movement. Less concerned with the emotions and expressionistic concepts, both men attend to bodies moving in time and space (Foss, 1986). It is their attendance to appearance rather than motivation that distinguishes them from Graham and her deep connection to the self. In accordance with the idea mentioned above that the identity of a dancer is a desired identity, Cunningham and Balanchine's biases to the physical body must be further examined to understand why current dancers may obtain this idea of the dancing being completely about the body. The close connection dancers have with the mind and body, many scholars argue that if preferences about body shapes persist the aesthetic ideals of rational thinking may never be broken (Zajonc as cited in Rubin et al., 1998). This is to say that what we commonly judge as aesthetically beautiful will never shift, unless we prefer something different through our interpretations. Therefore, it is important to define how individual body image (rational thinking) may sustain the way by which we judge and prefer certain body standards.

Rational thinking about how individuals construct images of the self is relevant when discussing Cunningham's approach to dance because of his dedication to human movement (Foss, 1986). Cunningham makes dance as a way to discover diverse ranges of movement. This is to say that he expects dances no less routine than sweeping the floor, except with bodies that can master simple activities or movement sequences. It is in his classes that one can enhance the body and develop an understanding of the organization of the body (Foss, 1986). It is the specific organization of the body that dancers come to understand their desired identity and unconscious self. Cash et al. (2004) and Wolszon (1998) define body images as an individual's evaluation and attitude toward self, in regards to physical appearance. Social and societal pressures are external forces that influence people to cultivate certain ideals. Therefore, dancers cultivate ideals and desired identities through their own rational thinking, which Foss (1986) explains lacks a close connection with the self. Then, the image of the body and rational thinking are the desired identity from external influences.

External influences were another way Cunningham discovered diverse ranges of movement. Through these influences or patterns of chance and change, Foss (1986) sees a relationship between Cunningham and Deborah Hay's work. Both artists rely on these chance procedures to create and determine sequencing. Likewise, Merce Cunningham and Deborah Hay saw continuity between class and performance, like the connection between life and art (Foss, 1986).

Despite her classification with these other modern dance pioneers, Hay's movement is much more concerned with the connection to the self on a cellular level. She believes satisfaction is felt when harmony is felt within self, group and world (Foss,

1986). Typically dance movements are thought of in respect to technical ability, as stated by Lewis (as cited in Reed, 1998) as the intertwined relationship between everyday movement and performed movements. In kinesiology, the first piece of knowledge and information we learned was that every thought effects the cells, making the mind deeply connected to the body. Lewis (as cited in Reed, 1998) supports this thought by articulating that the relationship between everyday movement and performed movement is conditional by the perception of the participant/observer. Hay's process incorporates the relationship of everyday movement and performed movement through her view of dance being for the building of community. This is to say that she emphasizes little changes occur when presenting to an audience so that it can be viewed as an activity " on a continuum with the dance life itself" (Foss, 1986, p. 53). Therefore, like all forms of art, the artists work has specific intention, but is subjective and at the mercy of the observer. In dance the body, the study of the body, and the interpretation of movement from the body are based on the perceptions of the observer. Consequently, despite Hay's intention for performance and connection to the harmonious moments, there is nothing necessary about the way in which audiences view dance.

As a result, the way in which we are conditioned effects the way we view the world and others in it. Thus, it is reasonable to mention that Foss' (1986) notion of "a world peopled with dancers and nondancers" (p.49) may ring true as a away to understand how we are conditioned. Through her exploration of the relationship between the subject and the body, the four choreographers posed as four definitions to the connections we see between the body and self. As external influences, i.e. teachers, choreographers, and observer's, each choreographer lent their ideals to be analyzed and

discussed in relationship with other scholars findings on the self identity and socialization. Therefore, Foss' (1986) section, *Four Bodies and Subjects*, presents itself as a means to examine further the mind / body connection and social identities.

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Lorene Gingerich: Aesthetic

The involuntary and voluntary use of breath creates organic rhythm and movement in the body. Every breath produces movement and dance is created from the bodies movement, then, so long as the body is capable of movement, dance can be produced. Any movement, from a breath to a jump, can be considered a dance. Then it is individual opinion that qualifies what movements are considered "dance." Two types of opinions that assist in qualifying movement as dance are audiences and dancers opinions. Audiences qualify movement as dance through the visual appeal and satisfaction they find in the dancer(s) performed movement. Secondly, dancers are satisfied with movement that excites them both emotionally and physically. Therefore, what we are compelled to watch or attracted to do depends on what movement we qualify as beautiful or truth.

As an audience member, dance is compelling to watch when dancers are able to expose their raw self. This is to say that as an audience member I am completely satisfied when dancers are able to make the audience believe their emotions and relationship to what is being performed. Dance is exciting and mouth watering when dancers sincerely make a connection or melt into one another with some sort of their body. Most recently as an audience member the human connection and interpersonal relationships have been the most captivating. It is fulfilling to experience the anguish and passion of the dancers because it means that the dancers are being genuine. The most frustrating feeling as audience member is feeling like you are being lied to, as if the dancer them self does not believe their own role or part in the performance. That is why watching a small group or a duet is compelling because each of their parts are essential to the piece. A duet and

small group are captivating when the audience is able to insert its own label as to what comprise the dancers relationship. For example, if after a performance the audience can debate over the type of relationship (romantic, friends, siblings, strangers, etc.) the dancers were involved in then the dancers connection was believable. Then, it is satisfying and beautiful when dancers are able to stir the audience into multiple levels of thinking, rather than leaving them with a literal translation of the choreography.

As a performer and mover, the types of movement that are most attractive involve close kinesphere and inward focus. A reason for this attraction is that as a tall individual my limbs are long and are prone to take up space. Contrasting to my limbs connection to far kinesphere, small contractions and undulations are most satisfying. Large movement is consistently produced through my body and others who are audience members often prefer these types of movements. Although it is exciting and challenging to perform quick and sudden movement with long limbs, it is not the movement type I prefer. Sustained and oozing movement are qualities I prefer as a mover, which are consistent with the qualities I find truth and beauty in as audience member. Music that regularly fits these movements and qualities are sounds from nature or instrumental music. The rhythm from this music creates a pulse and engages the use of breath, which drives this movement quality. Lastly, as a mover it is important to note that my movement aesthetic tends to be movement that feels good, it is a source of communication that resonates with me. The communication of relationships, emotions, and breath are devices that divulge my attraction to movement and are qualities that define what is beautiful in movement.

Shawn Beck-Gifford: Aesthetic

Dance for Shawn Beck-Gifford has evolved and changes throughout his experiences with dance. Through his experiences as a choreographer, performer and viewer, Shawn has developed his aesthetic.

First as a choreographer, Shawn is most interested in hip-hop rather than modern and jazz. He is interested in the way in which hip-hop has evolved from freestyle into being performed on stage. The most painful experience, he explains, is seeing freestyle on stage because it is not authentic. Shawn describes that freestyle is an improv and happens in that specific moment. However, when hip-hop is one stage it has been rehearsed and is no longer an improv. Therefore, Shawn expressed a great passion for experimenting with hip-hop as a stage performance.

Second, as a performer Shawn prefers to tell stories not necessarily narratives. He expressed that he is able to connect to the audience and dance honestly by telling a story. Likewise, as a performer Shawn expressed the difficulty he finds with standing still ("sustained") and prefers a lot of movement and high velocity ("quick and sudden").

Third, as a viewer of dance Shawn discussed that he loves Alvin Ailey, but thoroughly enjoys observing all types of dance. Also, he appreciates when dancers express themselves honestly and executes their intention to the fullest. Shawn believes that without executing each line and movement to its fullest, dancers and the audience lack fulfillment with their performance.

Lastly, he explains how music has plays a role in his choreography, as a performer and as a viewer. Before college Shawn choreographed to the beats, counts and rhythms, whereas now, he generates movement and then adds music. A relationship

builds between movement and music where the movement becomes routine and familiar, therefore by changing the music to movement it adds to discovery and freshness of the material.

Dance Summaries

Dance History

~Incorporated themes of philosophy to discuss how dance has been studied. Read scholars-Cynthia Novack, Martha Graham, William Gibson, and Elizabeth Grosz who debate the role of the body and the mind to understand dance.

~ As technology developed it became incorporated in choreography, dance culture and performances. For example, in *Barbie Swan Lake*, Motion Capture or senor technology was used to recreate NYC Ballet dancers authentic movement into animation. Discussed the innovation of these technologies, as well as some of the repercussions modern technology may have on work for dancers.

To Dance is Human

~ Assessed dance through our previous experiences and looked at how culture effects our sense of self in those experiences. Identified individual cultural to better understand the elements that explain how and why we experience things a certain way.
~ Discussed dance not as a technique, but examined how dance has been influenced and created through cultural practices, rites and rituals.
~Ramaa Bharadvaj as a guest performer demonstrated dances from the Indian culture and lectured on the origin of dance from the Creator, Brahma. The ultimate goal and purpose for creating dance was to tell a story and Indian artists treat their performances as sacred acts, often beginning with an offering or pray.
~Learned to pay attention to the rhythms of life from Lady Walquer and the natural human impulses that are operating to create a unity and connection of the physical and spiritual essences.
~Dulce Capadolcia explained how she blended separate identities to create her personal dance aesthetic. Through diagrams and charts she demonstrated how the Filipino culture, spirit, and tradition has transcended into what she considers her "Contemporary American" aesthetic.
~ Developed an appreciation and knowledge of Hula dancing as more than luau entertainment, but a deeply rooted and valued cultural practice. Amy Ku'uleialoha Stillman emphasized studying the history of Hula dancing and how each arm gesture and footstep is highly valued.
~Attended a field visit in order to put into practice and observe the elements of culture and its affects on dance. Through examining our experiences, in the field, we produced a significant personal reflection that created and described the dancing we witnessed, in relation to the issues discussed in class.
~As a professional storyteller, Karen Golden gave performances to demonstrate the ways in which you can tell and frame your particular story. She lectured on how movement and stories come together through these three categories: 1) characters; 2) rhythm and 3) audience.
~ Learning how to tell a story translated into the telling of our own life stories through a basket project. With the use of objects, fabrics, and other materials we composed a

basket, which represented some significant cultural markers, and told a story in relation to one specific marker.
~Gerry Keams participated and contributed in teaching a Native American basket dance, which would conclude each storytelling circle.

Laban

~Developed an understanding of Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) and the pioneering work of Rudolph Laban and his students. Likewise, came to an understanding of LMA and its placement within dance history.
~Exercised Laban as a systematic way of analyzing movement and the qualities those movements possess.
~Studied the four basic principles (Body, Effort, Shape, and Space) that Laban and his students formulized to define and understand movement.
~ Through use of symbols Laban created a system to write about dance. When these symbols are used a motif is formed and followed. We practiced, performed and wrote motifs so that we could establish a means of describing movement without the use of our bodies.
~Examined Barteniff's Fundamentals in relation to Laban's work and learned that she brought his work to the U.S. and extended it from a descriptive approach to a prescriptive approach.
~ Laban's first principle we learned was Body, which included Patterns of Total Body Organization (PTBO's) based on developmental movements Breathe, Core distal, head tail, upper lower, body half, and cross lateral. Susan Goldberg vividly was able to demonstrate and articulate these developmental movements because of her pregnancy.
~Within Shape there are two opposing actions, which include still forms and the process of changing your shape. Some still forms include: pin, ball, wall, screw, and tetrahedral. The qualities that are used to describe the process of changing your shape give information about altitude in the body, i.e., rising and sinking, advancing and retreating, and spreading and enclosing. In the process of changing shape it is not enough to say a shape opens and closes, but to ask where it's changing.
~Breath supports Shape Flow Effort through similar changing movement processes. Shape Flow is supported by these types breath changes: lengthening, shortening, bulging, hallowing, widening, and narrowing.
~Investigated the quality Effort through Flow, Space, Time and Weight.

Flow-free and bound flow
Space- indirect and direct
Time- sustained and sudden
Weight- strong and light

We learned that whenever two efforts were used together that are referred to as states and there are six states Laban defines: Dream (weight/flow), Stable (weight/space), Mobile (flow/time), Remote (flow/space), Rhythm (weight/time), and Awake (space/time).

~Took notation of kinesphere and investigated what type of kinesphere we use. Likewise, experimented with finding the dimensions and planes of spatial pull.

~Worked with the fundamental principles of Laban and Barteniff to create and put written motifs into movement studies and duets.
~ Body-Mind Centering helped us put into practice the discussions we had about the mind/body connection in Dance History. Through the use of props and movement exploration we created the distinction among using the body and the mind.
~ Used water balloons to engage the mind in thinking about the fluids of the body.

Styles and Forms

~Used principles from Fundamentals of Composition, Laban Movement Analysis, and personal habits to explore the creative process and develop our personal aesthetic.
~ Watched various videos to demonstrate artistic diversity among contemporary 20th century choreographic dance aesthetics.
~Identified that the creative process can begin with improvisation, so that ideas may flow naturally and eventually develop into a motif or phrase.
~Encouraged to acquire and develop a phrase of movement that could be performed multiple times in the choreography.
~Introduced to choreographic devices: canon, accumulation, transposition, retrograde, repetition, transformation, augmentation, diminution. Practiced choreographic devices on motif phrases in order to participate in creative problem solving.
~Choreographed a Site Specific Study that required a site selection and investigating specific choreographic problems; for example: using choreographic devices to transpose a phrase in a space that was not conducive to large movements.
~Evaluated on the ability to perform in a dynamic movement range, which required approaching movement and demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of the use of space, energy and time.
~ Witnessed several interviews with dance choreographers and other dance professionals, which promoted our understanding of the creative process and "Dance Talk" contributed to each individuals personal dance aesthetic.
~Developed understanding for music dance relationships and working with sound. We created short duets to assist us in developing strategies for working with music and dance.
~At the completion of the course we were asked to write a paper on our own personal aesthetic. Writing an essay on our personal dance aesthetic required reviewing the ideas promoted while developing our creative and choreographic process.

Ballet

~Discovered and increased proper alignment and placement in arabesque, adagio combinations and port de bras.
~With a live accompanist we were prompted to develop musicality and personal style in order to fulfill every beat in each measure.
~Became more conscious of the strength and control required for petit and medium allegro. Continuous work and attention was paid to foot, knee, and ankle alignment throughout these exercises.
~The use of breath and free flow should be used to convey ease in the upper body and torso, while the core remains engaged and the lower half executes sustained or sudden movement.

~Developed a greater range of movement and flexibility in the hip capsule and lower back.
~Increased understanding of passé alignment as the opposing forces required to execute its proper placement. Igniting the hamstrings became imperative and relevant whenever maintaining this position.
~Sharpen, fine tune, and clarify vocabulary of various positions, facing, and steps. Increase motivation and endurance within each phrase and combination.
~ Think of growing, lengthening, and reaching out of the hips and torso to create the illusion and exaggerate the length of the body.
~Maintain and present a positive outlook or attitude during each class.
~ Use only the turnout I maintain and forgo over rotating for what may look better.

Jazz

~Challenged to explore moving dynamically through space with fluidity and clarity.
~Developed movement quality that could hit an accent with energy and strength.
~Given routines to practice and establish a performance quality ready for an audition.
~ Experienced a midterm intensive that included working with: Terry Beeman, Mandy Moore, Helene Phillips, Robert Schultz, Terry Lindenholm, and Lisa Copella.
~Adagio combinations during warm up were given to challenge our alignment and use of the core body, but also to facilitate a better understanding of strengths and weakness and how we cannot back out of places of difficulty.
~Required to come to class with the willingness to be pushed beyond our own personal limits.
~ Personal coaching so that each student could tailor their growth within the jazz genre.
~Challenged to increase flexibility and coordination.
~ Continuously encouraged to use the length of my legs and grow taller out of my torso.
~Quick and sharp movements in and out of the ground (i.e. pitch to the ground and roll) were demonstrated and required.

Moving To A City

Colleges in or near San Francisco, CA

San Francisco State University: School of Music & Dance

San Francisco, CA
(415) 338-1431
sfsu.edu

Mills College: Dance

5000 MacArthur Blvd
Oakland, CA
(510) 430-2175
voiceofdance.com

University of California-Berkeley: Theater Dance & Performance Studies
Berkeley, CA

(510) 642-1677
berkeley.edu

Laney College: Bay Area Dance Series
Oakland, CA

(510) 464-3540
performingarts.net

Marin Dance College
Kentfield, CA

(415) 485-9315
pointemagazine.com

College of San Mateo: Physical Education-Athletics-Dance
San Mateo, CA
(650) 574-6461
foundationccc.org

California State University East Bay: Theatre & Dance
Hayward, CA
(510) 885-3118
csueastbay.edu

Dance Studios: San Francisco, CA

Metronome Ballroom
1830 17th St
San Francisco, CA
(415) 252-9000
metronomedancecenter.com

Rhythm & Motion Dance Center
1133 Mission St
San Francisco, CA
(415) 621-0643
rhythmandmotion.com

Dance Brigade's Dance Mission Theater

3316 24th St
San Francisco, CA
(415) 826-4441
dancemission.com

Broadway Studios

435 Broadway
San Francisco, CA
(415) 291-0333
broadwaystudios.com

Fat Chance Belly Dance

670 S Van Ness Ave
San Francisco, CA
(415) 431-4322
fcbd.com

City Ballet School

32 Otis St
San Francisco, CA
(415) 626-8878
cityballetschool.org

Flamenco Academy of Dance

26 7th St # 5
San Francisco, CA
(415) 468-6734
flamenco-academy.com

Academy of Ballet

2121 Market St
San Francisco, CA
(415) 552-1166
chamberdancesf.org

San Francisco Ballet School

455 Franklin St
San Francisco, CA
(415) 553-4642
joffreyballetschool.com

Ballet Studio

128 10th St
San Francisco, CA
(415) 861-5520
balletstudiosf.com

Genesis Ballroom

404 Clement St
San Francisco, CA

(415) 221-7125
genesisdancesport.com

Alexander Technique - San Francisco

1357 Guerrero St.
San Francisco, CA

(415) 342-6255
alexandertech.org

Carol Wei's School of Dance

403 32nd Ave
San Francisco, CA
(415) 751-9212
voiceofdance.com

Mary Sano Studio of Duncan Dancing

245 5th St # 314
San Francisco, CA

(415) 357-1817
duncandance.org

Soaring Steps

1517 North Point St. #353
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(415) 424-4896
References: soaringsteps.org - **19 more »**

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San Francisco, CA

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Vima Dance Studio

560 Third St
San Francisco, CA
(415) 977-0203
vimadance.com

Fusion Swing & Blues Dance

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380 Bartlett Street, San Francisco, CA
(415) 533-9465
blues-dance.com

Belly Dance & Yoga Instruction

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(415) 387-6833
maganabaptiste.com

Arthur Murray Franchised Dance Studios

1532 Taraval St
San Francisco, CA
(415) 682-2700
arthurmurraylasvegas.com